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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 001058

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR REVIEWS U.S. TRIP WITH PRIME MINISTER

REF: (A) STATE 95073 (B) STATE 95019

Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. On September 17, Ambassador Gfoeller met with Kyrgyz Prime Minister Igor Chudinov to discuss his upcoming visit to the U.S. Chudinov told the Ambassador that Kyrgyzstan would like to strengthen its economic and commercial relationship with the U.S. The Ambassador gave Chudinov a copy of the draft memorandum of understanding for the Economic Development Fund, noting that it might be possible to sign it during his visit to Washington. Chudinov discussed increasing U.S. assistance to Kyrgyzstan and said that he would provide a letter to the Ambassador outlining areas for cooperation. Chudinov said that President Bakiyev has ordered the creation of a commission of experts to review Kyrgyzstan's political and social indicators in relation to MCC standards. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) In a cordial meeting on September 17, Ambassador and Kyrgyz Prime Minister Chudinov discussed his upcoming trip to the U.S. and meetings in New York for UNGA and Washington. Chudinov said that he viewed this trip as an important opportunity to elevate the U.S.-Kyrgyzstan dialogue and to include economic and commercial issues. He hoped his meetings would lead to new opportunities for economic cooperation. (NOTE: The Kyrgyz Prime Minister is responsible more for economic than political issues. END NOTE).

¶3. (C) Chudinov said that Kyrgyzstan wanted to develop agriculture, tourism and energy. The Ambassador provided Chudinov with a copy of the draft memorandum of understanding for the Economic Development Fund, noting that he could sign it with Assistant Secretary Blake in Washington if it could be finalized in time. Chudinov told the Ambassador that he would review the MOU and provide comments.

U.S. ASSISTANCE

¶4. (C) Chudinov thanked the U.S. for its continued assistance to Kyrgyzstan. He said that our Defense ministries were cooperating well in all areas, including technical assistance. He requested additional assistance for Kyrgyzstan's Border Service. The Ambassador noted that the U.S. had built 12 border posts and was planning an additional 12 in the coming months, noting that she opened a U.S.-built border post in Batken province in August.

¶5. (C) Chudinov noted that assisting the Border Service would help in the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism. The Ambassador responded that the U.S. was prepared to increase its cooperation with Kyrgyzstan. The Ambassador requested Chudinov provide the Embassy with concrete ideas and information on what kind of assistance Kyrgyzstan wanted

from the U.S.

¶ 16. (C) Chudinov stated that Kyrgyzstan was also looking for U.S. equipment, in addition to technical assistance. He said that there was concern in the GOKG that the \$30 million project to modernize Kyrgyzstan's air traffic control system would leave Kyrgyzstan without a compatible system at all its airports. The Ambassador explained to Chudinov that the air traffic control survey team from the U.S. was working closely with all the relevant Kyrgyz agencies and ministries and would recommend to the GOKG an air traffic control system that was compatible with Kyrgyzstan's current national air traffic control system.

TRIP TO THE U.S.

¶ 17. (C) The Ambassador reviewed with the Prime Minister his meetings in New York and Washington. Chudinov said that in Washington he planned to discuss with USG officials increasing Kyrgyzstan's role in the economic development of Afghanistan. He said that Kyrgyz companies wanted to participate more in U.S. contracts and tenders for services and goods there. He would also raise with the World Bank and the IMF a proposal to forgive Kyrgyz debt in return for Kyrgyzstan providing equipment and materiel, such as cement, lamps, textile and other goods, to Afghanistan.

¶ 18. (C) Chudinov stated that Kyrgyzstan is interested in developing its agricultural sector with the participation of U.S. companies and with USG assistance. Kyrgyzstan hoped to

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use some of the funds from the \$20 million Economic Development Fund to develop the agriculture, tourism and energy sectors. He wanted the private sector to play an active role in the Economic Development Fund.

PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION

¶ 19. (C) Referring to the concerns of the Millennium Challenge Corporation with Kyrgyzstan's political development, Chudinov said that President Bakiyev has ordered the creation of a commission of experts to review Kyrgyzstan's political and social indicators. The Ambassador told Chudinov that Kyrgyzstan was falling behind, highlighting the problems with the July presidential election. Chudinov understood, reiterating that Kyrgyzstan wanted to improve its indicators.

COMMENT

¶ 10. (C) Chudinov, well-spoken and intelligent, is a good representative for Kyrgyzstan and is the highest ranking GOKG official to visit the U.S. in several years. The Embassy has heard from several contacts in the Prime Minister's office that Chudinov is concerned about his trip and is looking to make a good impression.

GFOELLER